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Farm Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture

Office of Public Affairs

Radio-TV Division

Washington, D.C. 20250

(202) 720-4330

Letter No. 2603

March 26, 1993

ETHANOL EXEMPT -- President Clinton has exempted ethanol from the proposed BTU tax to encourage use of alternative fuels. Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy says the decision is a victory for farmers, and will make the U.S. less dependent on foreign oil while strengthening rural America. Studies show that for every 100 million bushels of corn used in the production of ethanol the price of corn rises four to six cents a bushel. For every one-cent increase in the price of corn the federal government saves \$50 million in farm program costs. Methanol was also exempted. Contact: Steve Kinsella (202) 720-4623.

IMPROVING RESOURCE MANAGEMENT -- USDA will take an active role in promoting conservation and stewardship of the forest, range and crop lands across the country. Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy says USDA will work together with the Department of Interior to solve resource management problems, instead of creating new ones. Speaking in Washington, D.C. to the North American Wildlife & Natural Resources Conference, Espy said that USDA must provide leadership so that the conservation record of American agriculture will continue to improve. Contact: Mary Dixon (202) 720-4623.

CREATING JOBS -- Creation of Federal enterprise zones to stimulate employment is of particular interest to rural areas. Enterprise zones apply tax incentives and other economic inducements to encourage business growth and investment in the target area. Research suggests that rural Federal zones may be even more successful than their urban counterparts in creating jobs. The zones can stimulate farm input, processing, and other agricultural industries. Since most farm households are dependent on off-farm income, they will benefit from job creation. Recent statistics indicate that income earned off the farm generated 85% of the farm household's total income in 1991. Contact: Cathy Greene (202) 219-0313.

WHITEFLY ENEMY -- A fungus harmless to humans and animals that naturally occurs on plants could be a promising way to control the sweetpotato whitefly. Scientists in Texas noticed that the fuzzy white fungus, *Paecilomyces farinosus*, killed both nymphs and adult whiteflies in farmers' fields. It occurs naturally in both Texas and California, states where the insect has caused significant damage to crops. Experiments are being conducted to determine the best conditions for the fungus to grow, the amount needed to kill whiteflies, and whether it affects other insect species. Contact: Raymond Carruthers (210) 969-4852.

100 PERCENT ACCURACY -- For the past four years an experimental computerized system has accurately predicted when Sclerotinia blight, a disease causing fungi, is first noticed in peanut crops. In tests on Texas crops, the computer told of an impending blight outbreak three weeks before the disease was evident in the plants, giving time to apply treatment to prevent damage. The blight occurs when soil is wet and the soil temperature is less than 82 degrees. The computer system can help the farmer decide on the most efficient and environmentally sound use of chemical fungicides. Contact: Chip Lee (817) 968-4147.

CATTLE HERDS EXPANDING -- More and heavier cattle on feed could put pressure on winter prices. Fed cattle marketings could increase over half a million head this year to 22.6 million, the largest since 1989. Increased beef exports are expected to support higher prices. Contact: Steve Reed (202) 219-1285.

DIET AND CANCER -- Research indicates that 35 percent of all cancers may be related to diet. Food preparation is a key to lowering fat, a risk factor for many cancers. Avoid frying meats, poultry and fish, it adds extra fat and calories. Use vegetable cooking sprays, or bake, poach, steam, oven-broil, or stir fry meats, poultry and fish. Select lean cuts of meat, trim away all visible fat, and remove the skin from poultry. To flavor meats and vegetables use herbs and spices, onion, lemon or mustard instead of butter and fats. Eat several helpings of vegetables every day, steamed vegetables should be cooked for a short time in as little liquid as possible. Substitute skim milk for whole milk or sour cream. Choose desserts made with milk or yogurt instead of those made with cream. Reducing fats and adding fiber is the goal. Contact: Donnna Montgomery (504) 388-6701.

GETTING KIDS TO LISTEN -- "How To Talk So Kids Will Listen" is a program created by New Mexico State University's Cooperative Extension Service that outlines better ways for parents and teachers to communicate with children. The program uses a combination of video tapes, group discussion, and written exercises to turn participants into better role models for children. "What kids learn most is what they see and hear," says Diana DelCampo, Extension family life specialist. "They model what they've seen their parents do." Segments include traditional, counterproductive methods used by parents and reveals more effective ways to communicate. Other topics include including children's autonomy, praising children, and freeing children from role-playing. DelCampo says anyone can teach it using the program leader's guide. Contact: Diana DelCampo (505) 646-6031.

CORN TO RUSSIA -- A \$20 million donation of 210,000 metric tons of U.S. corn will be shipped to the Russian Federation. The corn will be sold in Russia through private marketing channels, supporting food assistance programs. Contact: James Keefer (202) 720-5263.

SPENDING COMPARISON -- The European Community has been outspending the United States in export subsidies and farm support for the last five years. The table provides a comparison of EC and U.S. agricultural spending in billions of dollars:

EC AND U.S. FARM SUPPORT SPENDING (in \$Bil.)

EURO. COMM.	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
Export Subsidies	7.2	10.4	11.4	10.7	9.7	12.3	13.7
Stock Deprec.	0.5	0.0	2.6	2.7	11.2	4.2	7.4
Domestic Support	13.7	15.6	18.2	14.5	12.2	24.3	25.7
EC TOTAL	21.4	26.0	32.2	27.9	33.1	40.9	46.7
UNITED STATES							
Export Subsidies	0.1	1.0	1.5	0.4	0.4	1.4	2.6
Domestic Support	25.7	22.1	12.3	10.6	6.5	9.4	8.3
U.S. TOTAL	25.9	23.1	13.8	11.1	6.9	10.8	10.9

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA # 1868 -- Watching and feeding wild birds is now America's fastest growing hobby and is fueling the development of a billion dollar industry. Gary Crawford presents a look at the hobby and some advice from experts on how to get started. (Weekly reel -- 13-1/2 minute documentary.)

CONSUMER TIME # 1350 -- Allergy-free rubber; better food through better technology; beans bounce back; aquatic gardening; popcorn improvement. (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 to 3 minute consumer features.)

AGRITAPE NEWS & FEATURES #1860 -- USDA News Highlights; farm price support program update; ethanol update; South China links with U.S. exporters; farming in suburbia. (Weekly reel of news features.)

NEWS FEATURE FIVE #1613 -- Methyl bromide research; making exports insect free; Texas fungus hits whiteflies; amaranthus, a health food grain; global change & ranchers. (Weekly reel of research feature stories.)

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Thursday, Apr. 1, horticultural exports; Friday, Apr. 2, U.S. tobacco outlook, floriculture production; Monday, Apr. 5, cotton and wool update; Tuesday, Apr. 6, weekly weather and crop update. These are the USDA reports we know about in advance. Our Newsline carries many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup. Please don't let the lack of a story listing keep you from calling.

DIAL THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINE (202) 488-8358 or 8359.
Material changed at 5 p.m., EDT, each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION SERVICE

FEATURES -- DeBoria Janifer provides information about USDA's wind erosion report.

ACTUALITIES -- Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy speaks to the Public Voice National Food Policy Conference; USDA meteorologist Bob Stefanski updates U.S. crop and weather conditions; USDA economist Steve Reed on Easter egg and meat supplies; and USDA economist Peter Buzzanell on sugar and sweeteners.

UPCOMING FEATURES -- Lynn Wyvill reports on USDA's parasite collection; Pat O'Leary reports on the Easter egg business; and DeBoria Janifer reports on nutrition during pregnancy.

EVERY OTHER WEEK -- Agriculture Update with anchors Eric Parsons and Lori Spiczka. 4:30 of USDA farm program information in news desk format with B-roll.

Available on Satellite Galaxy 6, channel 23, audio 6.2 or 6.8, downlink frequency 4160 MHz.: Thursdays from 7:30 - 7:45 p.m., EDT, Saturdays from 10 - 10:30 a.m., EDT, and Mondays from 8 - 8:30 a.m., EDT.

OFFMIKE

ITS BEEN A LONG WINTER...and producers are waiting for spring to arrive, says **Matt Westergaard** (KMIT, Mitchell, SD). Snow cover is gone, but single digit temperatures at night keep moisture frozen in the ground. Matt says planting usually gets underway in mid-April in the Mitchell area. Matt's station recently conducted its Farm Sweepstakes banquet featuring a steak dinner for winners from each sponsor's business and a drawing from the group for the grand prize.

CONGRATULATIONS...to **Jeff Stewart** (Ag Radio Network, Utica, NY) who will graduate May 19 with the 4th State Food and Agricultural Leadership Institute Class of Cornell University. Purpose of the two-year program is to develop leaders who will be involved in public policy issues confronting the ag industry and communities in New York. The 30-member class was recently in Washington, D.C. meeting with USDA, embassy, and congressional leaders. Jeff says House Ag Committee chairman **Kika de la Garza** (D-15th TX) spent over an hour with the group and got to tell his submarine story. Next month the class tours Georgia and Florida agriculture industries.

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MODERATOR/INTERROGATOR...was the official title for **Kelly Lenz** (WIBW/Kansas Ag Network, Topeka) who led a panel of the National Grain and Feed Association during its mid-March meeting in Washington, D.C. Kelly says the panel considered the question, "The Future for U.S. Agriculture, Can it Grow Again." They discussed lots of problems, but the bottom line answer was "Yes."

COUNTY ORDINANCES...on composting facilities will affect poultry industry operations, says **Homer Quann** (WSVA, Harrisonburg, VA). Producer plans must reflect the input of a qualified engineer. Its part of the effort to reduce pollution of the Chesapeake Bay. Deadline for compliance is July 1994. Homer says his station uses some of USDA's radio material in non-ag programs, using the theme that agricultural research benefits consumers too.

CONGRATULATIONS...to USDA Radio's **Maria Bynum** and her husband **Nadab** on the birth of their first child, **Ashley Morgan Bynum**, born March 24 weighing six pounds seven ounces. Maria will be on maternity leave for the next three months. **Jim Henry** is serving on the radio staff during her absence.

VIC POWELL *Vic Powell*
Chief, Radio & TV Division